



DEC 30 2003

Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Tribal Leader:

Secretary Tommy Thompson remains committed to enhancing the tribal consultation process at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As the Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs it is my responsibility to ensure tribal leaders are informed and provided an opportunity to participate in HHS consultation issues.

This letter describes three important activities underway at the Department and solicits your participation in them. They include 1) establishment of a HHS Tribal Consultation Policy Revision Workgroup, 2) establishment of a Federal-Tribal-State Human Services Workgroup, and 3) formal announcement of the 6th Annual HHS Tribal Budget Consultation Session.

Secretary Tribal Consultation Policy Revision Workgroup

In response to tribal leaders recommendations to improve the HHS tribal consultation process, HHS is forming a workgroup to provide advice and assistance in revising the existing HHS Tribal Consultation Policy. This remained a top priority of tribal leaders when we consulted with you during our nine regional tribal consultation sessions at which we shared copies of the Secretary's policy and solicited your comments and recommendations. Attached you will find a proposed schedule of activities and timelines for completion of draft and final policy documents. Several national meeting locations have been identified as potential sites to conduct workgroup meetings should workgroup members be in attendance; however, most workgroup sessions will be held via teleconference and communications conducted via email and/or facsimile. No travel funds will be available. Tribal leaders are asked to nominate an individual and an alternate and submit their names to my office via letter, email or fax no later than 5:00 p.m., (EST), January 30, 2004.

Federal-Tribal-State Human Services Workgroup

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), a state-based organization, invited HHS to join in the first-ever Federal-Tribal-State collaboration project to jointly address human services programs. HHS is pleased to join with NCAI and APHSA on this initiative and wishes to further involve tribal leaders to ensure all tribal governments have an opportunity to participate in the formation of a workgroup. The workgroup will be responsible for assisting in the planning of issue-specific human services policy academies that will be open to broader tribal/state participation. I am including the project goals and objectives for your review and comment. The workgroup will be guided by the human services policy issues tribal leaders identified at the 2003 regional tribal consultation sessions, the recommendations received at the HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) national tribal consultation session held December 2, 2003 in Phoenix, Arizona, and issues that NCAI and APHSA solicited for this project. For example, joint project efforts may focus on child welfare, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

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implementation, data/information systems, training and technical assistance needs, and/or child support enforcement. As with the tribal consultation workgroup, several national meeting locations will be identified as potential sites to conduct workgroup meetings should workgroup members be in attendance; however, most workgroup sessions will be held via teleconference and communications conducted via email and/or facsimile. No travel funds will be available. Tribal leaders are asked to nominate an individual and an alternate from your Area and submit the names to my office by letter, email or fax no later than 5:00 p.m., (EST), January 30, 2004.

6th Annual HHS Tribal Budget Consultation Session

HHS will host the 6th Annual Tribal Budget Consultation Session on May 12 and 13, 2004 at the Hubert H. Humphrey Building in Washington, DC. We invite tribal leaders, national and regional tribal governmental organizations and other Native organizations to participate in our annual session. In response to tribal leaders recommendations, we have expanded the consultation session to include an extra day for technical assistance sessions with our division staff and to provide tribal leaders an opportunity to make any final edits to their presentations before the formal consultation session begins the following day. I look forward to co-chairing the 6th Annual Tribal Budget Consultation Session along with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Budget, Technology and Finance (ASBTF). IGA will work closely with everyone to coordinate the agenda preparation as we have done in years past. We welcome everyone's participation and if you wish to join our planning sessions, please contact Ms. Eugenia Tyner-Dawson, Senior Advisor for Tribal Affairs at (202) 690-6060.

You may also review the HHS tribal consultation and previous budget consultation session transcripts at <http://www.hhs.gov/iga/tribal/>.

Nominations should be submitted to: Eugenia Tyner-Dawson
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Room 630F
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
(202) 690-6060 phone
(202) 205-2727 fax
[Eugenia Tyner-Dawson@HHS.GOV](mailto:Eugenia.Tyner-Dawson@HHS.GOV)

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Regina B. Schofield

Enclosures (2)

FEDERAL-STATE-TRIBAL HUMAN SERVICES PARTNERSHIP

Overall Objective

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) of the US Department of Health and Human Services will come together equally to look forward at human service policy and practice as it relates to American Indian children and families.

Purpose:

Such government entities as tribes, counties, states, and the federal government have all played a role in the delivery of social services to American Indian populations and persons residing on reservations. However, the sharing of information, best practices, promising approaches, and coordination between these entities in shaping federal policy can be improved. We believe the first step toward improving cooperation is to join together through this initiative. This collaboration lends itself to new opportunities to share best practices and approaches and to improve coordination and communication between the federal, state and tribal entities responsible for providing human services.

Rationale:

Tribes, counties, states, and the federal government have all played a role in the delivery of social services to American Indian populations and persons residing on reservations. However, there are significant issues in the delivery of services between and within governments such as the dual citizenship of Native families, the role of tribal sovereignty in collaborations with state and tribes, the often dual-eligibility of reservation-based Native families for both state-provided and tribally-administered services, as well as cross-cultural issues between the government entities. In addition, the sharing of information, technical assistance, best practices, promising approaches, and coordination between these entities on both implementation of programs and policy development has been sporadic at best. The situation will only grow worse unless coordination between these government entities is improved, especially recognizing the federal trend to open up the administration of additional programs to tribes.

Value of Participating Organizations:

Our organizations are uniquely qualified to come together to address the collaboration and coordination of human service programs in Indian Country as described below.

Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA), Department of Health and Human Services

This office serves as the Secretary of Human Service's conduit on human services policy matters concerning state, tribal and local governments, and their respective organizations. IGA is responsible for ensuring discussions occur between state and tribal partners as part of HHS' secretarial consultation responsibilities. It also is well-positioned to bring colleagues of the department to the initiative such as staff of the Administration on Children and Families that administers a majority of human service programs. Also, HHS Regional Directors (RD) system will have the opportunity to play an integral part to the process. They will have access to the products produced during the initiative, as well as provide technical assistance as requested.

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA)

As a membership association, APHSA can draw from its members that include all state and many territorial human service agencies, more than 1,200 local agencies, and several thousand individuals who work in or otherwise have an interest in human service programs. Our membership is not only the state commissioners and secretaries of human services but also the

directors of various programs such as Child Care, Child Welfare, Child Support, Food Stamps, Information Systems, TANF, and Medicaid. Many of these listed programs have organized into APHSA affiliate organizations, which hold regular meetings on their specific areas of expertise.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)

As the oldest, largest, and most representative national organization addressing the interests of American Indian tribal governments, NCAI works with elected tribal leadership and human service program directors from the 562 federally-recognized tribes to address a whole range of human service policy and programmatic issues. The umbrella function and structure of NCAI also means that various regional tribal organizations and national issue-specific tribal organizations are informed by and coordinated with NCAI's work. NCAI's committee structure also directs particular attention to human service programs through the work of the Human Resources Committee and, more specifically, the Indian Child and Family Welfare Subcommittee.

Goals:

Increase collaboration between federal, state, and tribal governments on the implementation of human service program in Indian Country for the purpose of sharing information and innovative ideas, and identifying best practices on a national level.

Increase collaboration between federal, state, and tribal governments to discuss and better inform federal policy proposals and decisions.

Increase federal/state/tribal understanding of tensions in specific human service policies and programs.

Develop strategies to locally improve federal/state/tribal communication and coordination on issues that affect Native families and children.

Increase tribal participation in the development of policies and plans of state-administered human service programs.

Expand opportunities for integration for programs that serve tribes at the local level by developing demonstration options and waiver opportunities with incentives that encourage state and local governments to participate.

Identify tribal experts with expertise in human services issues who can provide technical assistance to HHS regional staff in support of their tribal coordination, communication and consultation sessions.

Activities:

1) Initial Planning Meeting

Convene a joint HHS, APHSA, NCAI planning session in conjunction with the NCAI Annual Session in Albuquerque, New Mexico. At this meeting, participants will finalize the goals and objectives of the initiative for the year. They will also identify the key human service issues to be addressed in 3-4 joint policy academies, future meetings of the Advisory Group, various products of the initiative, and possible funding opportunities.

Time Frame: November 16, 2003

2) Tribal/State/Federal Human Service Task Force/Advisory Group

As a vehicle to facilitate collaboration between the three (?) entities an advisory group comprised of tribal and state human service administrators and key administration staff will be formed to guide the process. As the human service issues they will be asked to address is broad, it is important that participants have an expertise or understanding in multiple program areas such as TANF, child support, food stamps, and/or child welfare administration. This group will formulate the specific topics to be covered during the academies and be responsible for soliciting and responding to feedback from the broader communities.

Time Frame: In place by January 1, 2004

3) Human Service Academies:

One to two-day academies will be convened on specific human service program areas where tribal, state, and federal administrators can come together to discuss their respective roles and challenges in providing services to Native children and families. Communication and coordination barriers will be highlighted. Particular attention will be paid to programs that may be in the process of being transitioned from state to tribal administration. In this case, participants will identify the potential barriers faced in transitioning the program, identifying best practices for transfer, and fostering cooperation between the three governments to support the process. As part of the academies, expert participants will identify opportunities to assist HHS Regional Directors (RD) on the collaboration efforts and technical assistance stream that will be developed for the benefit of the RDs to enhance their ongoing state, tribal, local coordination, communication and consultation sessions. IGA, APHSA, and NCAI will actively engage the RDs to provide direct technical assistance as requested.

Time Frame: 3-4 times over the course of the year.

4) Reports/Summaries:

Various materials and analyses related to the policy academy topics as well as general documents to improve intergovernmental understanding and facilitate communication and coordination of federal, state and tribal governments will be produced and disseminated throughout the course of the project. These materials will also be made broadly available on NCAI's and APHSA's websites.

A Project mid-term narrative semi-annual summary of accomplishments, barriers and progress on current activities will be produced and distributed as needed. Also a final report which includes outcomes in measurable terms in directly relation to the stated goals and objectives will be produced. This report will also identify successes of the collaboration and discuss whether future collaborations are warranted.

Time Frame: June and December 2004

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
CONSULTATION POLICY REVISION SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES
MARCH 2003 – OCTOBER 2004**

[illegible]

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTATION AND COMMENTS

1. Bi-Weekly Conference Calls of HHS/Tribal Consultation Policy Revision Workgroup
2. Dear Tribal Leader Letter for Each Draft (2) and Final (1)
3. Nongovernmental Native Organizations Letter for Each Draft (2) and Final (1)
4. Individual Comments (ongoing)
5. FY2004 HHS Regional Tribal Consultation Meetings (10)
6. FY2006 Regional Budget Formulation Meetings (TBD)
7. FY2006 HHS 6th Annual Budget Consultation Meeting May 12 and 13, 2004 (1)
8. National Tribal and Non-Governmental Native Organization Meetings (5)
9. Internal Clearances at each stage of the draft (2) and final policy revisions (1)
10. National HHS Tribal Consultation Policy Revision Meeting (1)